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Gator Times



235 Years
United States Navy

THE NAVY'S "TOP GATOR"

USS NASSAU (LHA 4)



Gator Times

LHA 4

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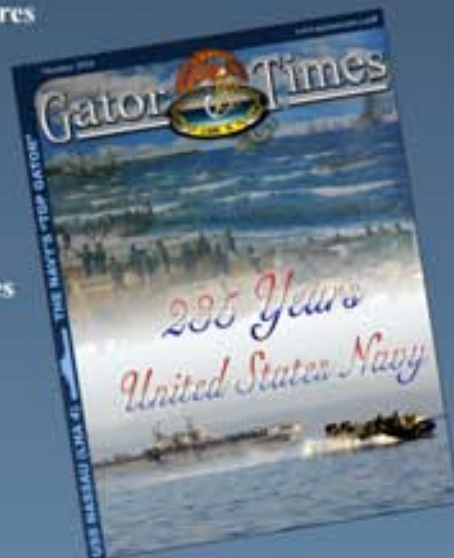
Gator Times is a product of the USS Nassau (LHA 4) Public Affairs Office. The editorial content of this newsletter does not necessarily reflect the official views of the command or any government agency and does not imply endorsement.

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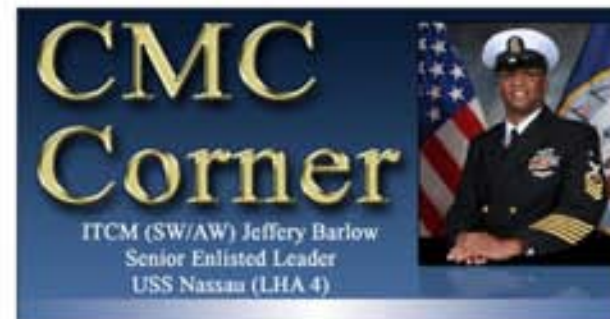


On The Cover:
On Oct. 13, 2010 USS Nassau (LHA 4) celebrated the US Navy's 235th Birthday.
Illustration by MCSN(SW/AW) Jonathan Pankau



A two ship Navy has grown into the most powerful and respected Navy the world has seen. It was with great pleasure that the Top Gator team wished the Navy a happy 235 years of service. Rear Admiral Scott, the Commander Expeditionary Strike Group Two, was onboard and participated in the "TOP GATOR" celebration of the Navy's birthday and by speaking with the crew. Another great celebration on the horizon is the annual Holiday Party on Dec. 15 at the Marriott Waterside Hotel in downtown Norfolk from 6 to 11:30 p.m. All family and friends are encouraged to attend so please discuss it with your service member to plan to attend.

I had the opportunity to go to Richmond recently and speak with the Richmond Navy League about all the great operations and missions that Nassau accomplished on her deployment in the 5th and 6th Fleet Areas of Responsibility. The objective and purpose of the Navy League is to inform U.S. citizens about the naval and maritime forces and equipment, and to also maintain the interest and cooperation in all matters of the navy. As our sponsor, the Richmond Navy League provided Nassau the opportunity of participating in their "Deployment Dollars" program, which went to all of the Sailors and Marines of the Week. This



Shipmates,

What an honor and privilege it is for me to have assumed the duties and responsibilities as Command Senior Enlisted Leader and acting Command Master Chief for USS Nassau.

I would like to take this time to share with you my philosophies as we work together in the coming months to prepare for the future of our ship and the crew.

Most importantly, now is the time to reiterate the essential tasks and mindset to get the job done and take care of Nassau as a whole.

First, the six P's – Prior Proper Planning

Captain's Call

Capt. Samuel Norton
Commanding Officer
USS Nassau (LHA 4)



greatly contributed to the morale of the crew during deployment and is a testament of the Navy League's vision.

Lastly, even though we're quickly approaching decommissioning, the ship will be mission-ready and operational to the very end. At the end of October, we will be underway for a few days to provide support for helicopter certifications and qualifications. I know we will all continue to see the great Top Gator work ethic and motivation during these underway periods.

Like always, our friends' and families' patience and support during these underways and while we're in port is valued greatly. Thank you for all for doing what you do.

Prevents Poor Performance. If you look far enough out to plan your day, week, month and even the next few years, it can allow for success both in the Navy and in your personal life. In order to execute the six P's, you must have Desire, Determination and Dedication, or as I like to say, the 3 D's. Always keep the desire in your heart and mind to be successful. Have the determination to stick to a plan and the dedication to follow through, even when the road gets rocky.

I urge everyone to remain diligent and to charge ahead to stay prepared should Nassau be called upon to provide assistance. This includes keeping the six P's, the three D's, ship maintenance, attitude and motivation in mind at all times.

Events we have to look forward to include three short underway periods, a visit from detailers to assist with new orders for the crew and command functions, including the adult and children's holiday party.

In the meantime, continue to keep up the good work, take care of our ship, our shipmates, and yourselves. I will see you about the deck plates.



Members of the Lead Virginia Program, located in Richmond, Va., walk the flight deck with Executive Officer Cmdr. Gregory Romero during a tour of USS Nassau on Oct. 15. Lead Virginia is a seven month program that takes place one weekend a month allowing business leaders from around Virginia to better understand financial and cultural differences in the states various regions. For many members of program it was their first time on board a Navy vessel. The group had a chance to eat lunch in the ships galley and visit with many of the ship's crew. Photo by MCSN Ian Carver



Senior Enlisted Leader Jeffery Barlow discusses plans with the Fleet Readiness Group during a meeting held Oct. 12 at First Baptist Church in Norfolk, Va. Photo by MC2 Kristan Robertson

Sailors from USS Nassau teamed with other local commands to set up the exhibits for the Freedom Tribute event held Oct. 14-17 at Bennett's Creek Park in Suffolk, Va.

Photo by MC2 Kristan Robertson

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What's up around Nassau...



Students from York County Naval Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (NJROTC) request permission from Officer of the Deck Lt.j.g. Benjamin Jones to come aboard USS Nassau for a tour on Oct. 8.

Photo by MC3(SW) Christopher Williamson



ESG2 celebrates with Nassau crew during visit



Story and photos by MCSN(SW/AW) Jonathan Pankau
USS Nassau Public Affairs

Commander, Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG) 2 Rear Adm. Kevin D. Scott celebrated the Navy's 235th Birthday aboard USS Nassau (LHA 4) Oct. 13.

Scott cut a cake with Nassau's youngest Sailor, Information

(Above) Commander, Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG) 2 Rear Adm. Kevin D. Scott and ITSA Bryan Roller, the youngest Sailor aboard Nassau at 19 years old, cuts USS Nassau's Navy 235th Birthday cake during a ceremony held on the ship's Mess Deck.

(Right) Scott (center) stands with Engineering department in front of the Burner Front mural painted by the department during Nassau's 2010 deployment.

Systems Technician Seaman Apprentice Bryan Roller during a Navy birthday ceremony on the ship's Mess Deck. Afterward, Scott sat down and spoke with the enlisted Sailors.

"I wanted to emphasize to the crew that the sacrifices they made and the professionalism they showed during Nassau's recent deployment and the preparations they are making for the ship's decommissioning are right in line with our deepest of Navy traditions that we are celebrating today on the Navy's 235th birthday," Scott said.

Nassau's Commanding Officer Capt. Samuel Norton added that Scott's visit also involved discussions concerning the ship's upcoming underways, the Board of Inspection and Survey visit, and decommissioning preparations.

"As the first flag officer in the ship's administrative chain of command, Scott visited various

ships in ESG 2 to be a part of their everyday activities," Norton said. "Scott likes to keep his finger on the pulse of what's happening on ships under his charge."

After discussing Nassau's upcoming schedule, Scott toured the ship's Flight Deck, Engineering spaces, and Main Galley. He then spoke to the crew assembled on the Mess Deck for the Navy's 235th Birthday Celebration.

"We talked and ate cake for a while after he made his speech," said Aircrew Survival Equipmentman 2nd Class (AW/SW) Charles Warren from IM02 division in AIMD. "Adm. Scott is very down to earth and it was encouraging to see him approach Sailors and speak with them one on one."

Once Scott finished talking with the Sailors assembled on Nassau's Mess Deck he departed the quarterdeck, but not before informing Norton of the quality of his crew.

"Nassau has an outstanding crew and I was very excited to visit the ship," Scott said.





Commander, Expeditionary Strike Group 2 Rear Adm. Kevin D. Scott and Lt. John Stahley, admire the Burner Front Mural painted by USS Nassau's Engineering Department during the 2010 deployment.

Commander, Expeditionary Strike Group 2 Rear Adm. Kevin D. Scott speaks with ABH3 (AW/SW) Olimpo Hurtado and ABH1 (AW/SW) Jorge Ramirez, both from the Air department's V-1 division, after USS Nassau's (LHA 4) 235th Navy Birthday cake cutting ceremony on the ship's Mess Deck.



Commander, Expeditionary Strike Group 2 Rear Adm. Kevin D. Scott talks to members of USS Nassau's Engineering Department in the Engineering Main Control Room.

U.S. Navy

October 13, 1775-2010



Commander, Expeditionary Strike Group 2 Rear Adm. Kevin D. Scott departs USS Nassau after celebrating the Navy's 235th birthday with the crew.



Commander, Expeditionary Strike Group 2 Rear Adm. Kevin D. Scott puts on a paper cover prior to entering USS Nassau's Main Galley.

Photos by
MCSN(SW/AW) Jonathan Pankau

Top Gator Sailors volunteer for 'Freedom Tribute'



Machinist's Mate Fireman Whitney Collins, from Engineering, MP2 division, holds steady a part of a display of all United States Presidents to be put together at the Freedom Tribute event held Oct. 14 - 17.

Story & photo by MC2 Kristan Robertson
USS Nassau Public Affairs

USS Nassau (LHA 4) Sailors, along with other local commands, volunteered time to set up the R.W. Baker Freedom Tribute event on Oct. 14 at the Bennett's Creek Park in Suffolk, Va.

The event, which ran through Oct. 17, was an organized set of exhibits, including a traveling 80 percent scale replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C., ceremonies and distinguished guest speakers to honor veterans of all U.S. wars and conflicts.

Sailors helped with set up on opening day to put up the replica wall with all 58,253 names of the fallen, just as the original, along with the other exhibits for the Korean War, World War II, Sept. 11 tragedies, Prisoners of War (POWs) and Missing in Action (MIAs) service members.

"I always enjoy an opportunity to help recognize the veterans that have come before us," said Aviation Ordnanceman Airman (SW) Lawrence Taylor from Weapons, G-3 division. "They made sacrifices long before (current service members), not to mention the ones that lost lives and it's important to not forget them."

Dr. Zinerva "Zin" White, Jr., a Vietnam veteran

decorated with two Purple Heart awards and a Silver Star, served as one of the guest speakers and spoke with the Sailors after the setup was complete.

White served 21 years in the Army with positions such as a platoon leader, officer, company commander and advisor in Vietnam until his retirement in August 1980.

"I was led here to speak so that the next generation will know that freedom isn't free," White said, "and I needed to be here out of respect for the service men and women for the price they pay."

He noted several aspects from the effects on the families of service members, his own ex-

"I enjoy an opportunity to help recognize the veterans that have come before us."

-AOAN Lawrence Taylor

periences and lessons learned and the overall vast number of service members that have been killed or wounded since the War of 1812.

"Coming out and doing this actually incited a new appreciation," said Aviation Boatswain's Mate - Fuels Airman Rafael Consuegra from Air department, V-4. "A lot of us join the military for one reason or another; usually its money, college or travel, not really keeping in mind what the military actually stands for. After having the chance to talk to a veteran from a whole other time in our military, you realize first-hand what's been laid out and sacrificed before our time. I'm glad I could be a part of something set up to honor those people and help others to remember."

According to a press release on the official web site, the "Freedom Tribute" is managed by the American Veterans Traveling Tribute, a non-profit organization based out of Flint, Texas.

R.W. Baker & Company, a 5th generation funeral home and crematory in Suffolk, Va., hosted the event as the only 2010 tour stop in the Mid-Atlantic region, according to Robin Magnisi, media contact for the event.

"In celebration of the company's 125th anniversary, R.W. Baker wanted to do something special and jumped at the opportunity to give back to the community and honor every service member and what they have given," said Magnisi.

Nassau observes Hispanic Heritage

Story and photos by
MC2 Kristan Robertson
USS Nassau Public Affairs

USS Nassau's (LHA 4) Multicultural Committee presented the 2010 Hispanic American Heritage Observance cake cutting ceremony on the Mess Deck Oct. 19.

Hispanic American Heritage Month is an annual observance that runs Sept. 15 - Oct. 15 to highlight and educate about the contributions and achievements of Hispanics in American culture.

Information Systems Technician 1st Class (SW/AW) Daniel Perez, observance coordinator, said, "It is important for everyone to understand the contributions that Hispanics, past and present, have offered to us as a people of this great nation as well as Sailors of this fine Navy."

This year's theme, "Heritage, Diversity, Integrity and Honor: The Renewed Hope of America," was noted in an opening speech by Chief Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Handling) (AW/SW) Angel Fuentes.

"The theme reflects the historical contributions of Latinos in the United States as we join the celebration of Latin American landmark indepen-



USS Nassau Commanding Officer Samuel Norton and Chief Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Handling) (AW/SW) Angel Fuentes, from Air department, V-3 division, cut the cake in honor of Hispanic American Heritage Observance on the Mess Deck Oct. 19.

dence anniversaries all over," said Fuentes.

"It also embodies the Latino community's embrace of the American Dream and its commitment to the success of this great nation."

Commanding Officer Capt. Samuel Norton and Fuentes cut the cake with the assistance of Executive Officer Cmdr. Gregory Romero for the crew members.

Afterward, a special meal was provided with contributions by Sailors of their favorite Hispanic dishes. Latin-Caribbean food was provided by Sabor Caribeño, a new Norfolk restaurant owned by Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Fuels) 2nd Class (AW) Juan Daniel Duarte, from Naval Air Station (NAS) Oceana Air Detachment Norfolk.

"Thanks to the crew of Nassau for giving us the opportunity to serve you," said Duarte. "It is our honor and privilege to provide you with a taste of Latin Caribbean cuisine while celebrating Hispanic culture."

In conclusion of the event, Perez said, "What we have presented here today is just a simple observance, but we hope that the crew of Nassau will walk away with a reminder of the history, culture and presence of Hispanics around the workplace, community and the world."



IT1(SW/AW) Daniel Perez, Hispanic American Heritage Observance coordinator for USS Nassau, ensures the Hispanic dishes, provided through donations by Sailors and the coordination with a local Latin-Caribbean restaurant, are ready for crew members following the ceremony held on the Mess Deck.

'Cruise to Lose' continues, shared with fleet

Story and photo by
MCSN(SW/AW) Jonathan Pankau
USS Nassau Public Affairs

USS Nassau's (LHA 4) Medical Department re-implemented the Cruise to Lose program Sept. 29 following a successful first run during the 2010 deployment.

Nassau's Senior Medical Officer Lt. Cmdr. Brian Norwood said the objective is to maintain the successful weight loss program and share it with the rest of the fleet.

"At the end of Nassau's 2010 deployment, 195 Sailors and Marines lost a total of 2,537 pounds. That's an average of 13.5 pounds per participant," Norwood said. "Although deployment offers the unique opportunity of a captive audience, Sailors have approached me and asked about the program."

Norwood said he is so sure that this program will work Navy-wide he is offering the program up to Ms. Nancy Von Tersch, the Public Health Educator at the Navy Environmental and Preventive Medicine Unit (NEPMU) 2.

"Any individual trying to lose weight has a multitude of information at their disposal," Von Tersch said. "Lt. Cmdr. Norwood's Cruise to Lose program is a good weight loss program that puts exactly what is needed in the hands of our Sailors to enable healthy lifestyle choices and backs it up with proven results."

Hospital Corpsman (HM) 1st Class (SW/AW/FMF) Jeremy Gibson assisted Norwood with the program. Gibson said the reason the program was such a success was the simple set up and personal motivational goals.

"There were no 'Biggest Losers' or prizes at the end. We didn't hire personal trainers to beat you up in the gym five days a week," Gibson said. "All you had to do was show up and weigh in once a week and tape your body fat measurements twice a week."

Gibson added that participants would receive a handout with helpful nutrition and exercise tips. These were not your generic handouts, however, as



Machinist's Mate 3rd Class Derrick Baysal is weighed for the Cruise to Lose program held in USS Nassau's Medical Triage. Baysal was recently married and is participating in Cruise to Lose to maintain a healthy weight and keep a long term habitual fitness plan.

each one was personalized with their weight loss progress with a graph to track their performance.

"The graphs became one of the biggest draws to the program," said program assistant HM1(SW/AW) Jennifer Tillard. "Sailors and Marines were hanging them up in their offices and berthings and challenging each other to lose more weight."

Von Tersch said naval fitness standards are increasing as more people sign up for the Navy. This and the urge to build muscle and live a healthy lifestyle can draw Sailors to programs like Cruise to Lose.

"I signed up for the course to stay in shape for the Navy Physical Fitness Assessment and also for my wife," said Machinist's Mate 3rd Class Derrick Baysal. "I married her two months ago and I want to stay healthy for my marriage."

The end of program survey reported that 75 percent of the participants lost the weight they wanted to lose at the start, 88 percent performed cardiovascular exercises on a more regular basis, and 94 percent were more satisfied with their overall health. Norwood said he heard many reasons why people signed up for the program and the results are a testimony to the program's efforts to simplify weight loss throughout the fleet.

Chaplain's Corner



Provided by Cmdr. Dan Stallard, Chaplain, USS Nassau Religious Ministries Department

Recently NASSAU funded and hosted two separate marriage workshops for our Sailors. We had 12 couples participate in the workshops. The material presented was PREP (Prevention Relationship Enhancement Program) based on the best selling book *Fighting for Your Marriage*. PREP is not pop psychology and is based on research reaching back to the 1970's and continues today. The seminal research in some of the studies that support the PREP model are based on John Gottman's work in why some marriages succeed and some fail (check out www.gottman.com).

The PREP model makes the following assumptions with regard to couple relationships:

- 1) Conflict is inevitable
- 2) How you resolve conflict determines the satisfaction of your relationships
- 3) Couples who resolve conflict over time have more loving and lasting relationships

At the core of this concept is that conflict resolution is critical to healthy relationships in general and marriage in particular. Gottman contends that it is the build up of negativity in relationships and the negative communication patterns that cause most divorces.

How can you create a positive dynamic marriage when faced with negativity?

- 1) Learn about the four danger signs in conflict: escalation, invalidation, negative interpretation and avoidance/withdrawal.
- 2) Learn research based communication and conflict resolution skills
- 3) Learn about issues and hidden issues in your relationship. The top three issues couples fight over are: money, sex and children. Also, there are many hidden issues that keep people in



constant conflict and it feels like you are spinning your wheels when you are trying to resolve an issue.

- 4) Learn how to apologize (see the *Five Languages of Apology* at www.5lovelanguages.com).
- 5) Know your partners Love Language and communicate it effectively

Finally, shipmates, this is my last Chaplain Corner, I have PCSed to the Naval War College as a student. Chaplain Chappell is here to help you. She is PREP qualified and a very competent marriage counselor. I have been blessed to be your Command Chaplain and will continue to pray for you all.

COMMAND ACHIEVEMENTS



ACADEMIC SKILLS GRADUATES



MMFN Carlos Brown
SN Eleasah Brown
SHSN Galen Bufford
AOAN Juan Caceres
CS3 Isaac Cooper
AO3 William Eisenhower
CS3 Dennard Elder
AS2 David Elliot
AO3 Lamar Fields
AOAN Terrika Fields
AN Robert Gardner
MM3 Ervin Gegpriffi
ABHAN Joshua Hazelwood
ABH3 Olimpo Hurtado
ABFAN Andre Johnson
MMFN Clarence Kollie
SH3 Damien Lee
MMFN Randolph Mays
CSSN Antonio McCoy
AOAN Hector Meza
SHSN Anthony Myers

MACS Derek Oglesby
MMFN Derek Opokudarko
SH3 Charles Pannell
ABHAN Cesar Penatrabous
ABFAN Bryan Ponzio
SH3 Darius Reid
MMFN Troy Scott
ABF3 Marc Simmons
ABF3 Antoine Slater
AOAN Durand Somsavath
ABHAN James Spencer
CSSN Derrell Sprye
MMFN Devin Stumpf
AOAN Wendy Toussaint
ABF3 Gillian Vann
PR2 Charles Warren
PRSN Brittany Watson
AC2 Deon Williams
SH3 McCrae Willis
SHSN Yanjuan Wu

